Non-payment of amount by Haj Committee

†2142. SHRI AJAY MAROO: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Central Haj Committee owes a huge sum to Air India;

(b) if so, the amount outstanding;

(c) the reasons for non-payment of this amount by Central Haj Committee; and

(d) the action being taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) to (c) An amount of approximately Rs. 29 crores is being claimed by Air India as outstanding against the Central Haj Committee which itself has a counter claim of approximately Rs. 32 crores.

(d) The Central Haj Committee has been requested to settle this matter at an early date.

Indians working in Lebanon

2143. SHRIMATI PREMA CARIAPPA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) by when it was known about attack by fellow forces in Lebanon;

(b) the number of Indians living in Lebanon at that time; and

(c) what efforts have been made by Government to help Indians working in different parts of Lebanon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI E. AHAMMED): (a) The outbreak of hostilities in the region was reported by the media and by our Mission in Tel Aviv on 12th July, 2006.

(b) At the outbreak of hostilities in Lebanon, approximately 12,000 Indians nationals were resident in Lebanon.

(c) The safety and welfare of Indian nationals who were resident in Lebanon has been our foremost concern. On July 17 2006, anticipating

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.